

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

The following is a complete, marked-up listing of revised claims with a status identifier in parenthesis, underlined text indicating insertions, and strike through and/or double-bracketed text indicating deletions.

**LISTING OF CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) Method for the preparation of a silicic acid ~~comprising including~~ extrudate, comprising the steps of:

i) ~~forming of~~ stabilized silicic acid, by hydrolysing a silicon compound into orthosilicic acid and/or oligomers thereof in the presence of a stabilizing agent, which is a quaternary ammonium compound, or an amino-acid, or an amino acid source or combinations thereof;

ii) ~~mixing of~~ the stabilized silicic acid with a carrier in an amount up to the loading capacity of the carrier for silicic acid; and

iii) ~~extruding~~ the resulting mixture thereby forming the extrudate.

2. (Original) Method according to claim 1, wherein silicic acid is orthosilicic acid and/or oligomers.

3. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 1, wherein the quaternary ammonium compound is choline chloride.

4. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 1, wherein the amino-acid is proline, serine, lysine, arginine, glycine or combinations thereof.

5. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 1, wherein the amino acid source is a polypeptide or a protein hydrolysate.

6. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 1, wherein the stabilized silicic acid comprises a silicon content of 2.5-3.5% by volume, a choline content of 65-75% by weight and a water content of 15-25% by weight.

7. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 1, wherein the carrier is mixed with the stabilised silicic acid in a ratio of 65-50% and 35-50% respectively.

8. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 1, wherein the carrier is cellulose or a derivatives thereof such as microcrystalline cellulose, hydroxypropylcellulose, hydroxypropylmethylcellulose, carboxymethylcellulose, and cellulose gum and/or other carriers or combinations selected from sugars such as lactose, pectines and algnates, poly- and oligosaccharaides such as malto-dextrine, glucans and derivatives thereof, starch and derivatives thereof, and natural and semi-synthetic fibers, protein and protein hydrolysates.

9. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 1, wherein the carrier is microcrystalline cellulose and the loading capacity for stabilised silicic acid < 50%.

10. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 1, wherein the extrudate is spheronized into particles.

11. (Currently Amended) Method according to claim[[s]] 1, wherein the particles are dried, preferably having a particle size between about 800 to about 1200  $\mu\text{m}$ .

12-14. (Cancelled).

15. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 2, wherein the quaternary ammonium compound is choline chloride.

16. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 2, wherein the amino-acid is proline, serine, lysine, arginine, glycine or combinations thereof.

17. (Previously Presented) Method according to claim 2, wherein the amino acid source is a polypeptide or a protein hydrolysate.

18-20. (Cancelled).